

To: Joint Policy Committee (JPC)

From: Ken Kirkey, ABAG Planning Director

Subject: Priority Development Area Evaluative Criteria; Priority Conservation Area Adoption Process

Date: May 18, 2007

Priority Development Area (PDA) Evaluative Process and Criteria

Application Process

Applications are now being accepted for priority development area designation under the FOCUS program. Local governments in the nine county San Francisco Bay Area are invited to apply for regional designation of an area within their community as a priority development area (PDA). Designation informs regional agencies which areas want and need assistance and expresses the region's priorities for growth, which can help connect with state efforts and programs. The deadline for submitting an application is June 29, 2007. Applications will be reviewed and evaluated, and areas that meet the designation criteria will be recommended for regional adoption as designated priority development areas.

Applicants must demonstrate that an area proposed for designation as a priority development area meets all of the following criteria:

- Within an existing community (not greenfield development).
- Near existing or planned fixed transit (or served by comparable bus service).
- The area is planned or is planning for more housing.

Application Review Process

Upon receipt, applications will be reviewed by regional agency staff. The review will check for completeness and eligibility. Subsequently, a broad based committee will evaluate applications and provide comments. Lastly, areas that meet the designation criteria will be recommended as priority development areas for regional adoption. As described in previous reports to the JPC, the initial priority area designation application process is an entry-level application. As incentives relative to either regional agency or state-level incentives become available, incentive-related applications will be made available to jurisdictions with designated Priority Development Areas.

PDA Evaluative Criteria - Recommendation

Areas eligible for Priority Development Area (PDA) designation will be subject to a variety of local plans: general plans, specific plans, neighborhood plans, precise plans, redevelopment plans and capital improvement programs. Staff is proposing that staff and a broad-based committee of local-government peers comprised of members of the FOCUS Technical Advisory Committee and Congestion Management Agency staff assess the body of these plans and related application information to provide

feedback to applicants. This approach would be modeled on that used to evaluate applications for MTC's Transportation for Livable Communities (TLC) and Housing Incentive (HIP) Programs. In keeping with those program models, sub-regional committees would be established ensuring against any conflict of interest (e.g. an east bay subcommittee would review applications from south bay jurisdictions).

The feedback commentary is intended to assist local governments in preparing their later applications for regional incentives. Feedback commentary relative to the plans assessment will be provided in narrative form. PDAs will not be ranked or graded.

The plans assessment will be based on the exploration of five key questions with applicants. These questions, based on the Smart-Growth Policies adopted by the JPC and the regional agencies, are as follows:

1. Community Improvement

How were the plans developed with community members to build upon existing assets, redress existing needs, forestall displacement, and improve the area for both present and future residents?

2. Housing Choice

How do the plans help expand housing tenure, affordability, form and density choices for the area and for the region?

3. Transportation Choice

How do the plans, through the provision of infrastructure and through the location of land uses, facilitate walking, bicycling and transit alternatives to automobile travel?

4. Land-use compatibility

How do the plans address adjacency issues and respect potentially conflicting but essential land-use and circulation functions?

5. Sustainability

How do the plans address and balance each of the three e's—economy, equity, and environment—to ensure net positive benefits for each?

Priority Development Area (PDA) Evaluative Process and Criteria
- Policy Recommendation

Staff recommends that the JPC endorse the evaluative process and criteria pertaining to applications for Priority Development Area designation as outlined in this memo.

Priority Conservation Area Adoption Process

FOCUS is about developing a regional consensus on where growth should go (Priority Development Areas) and where it shouldn't (Priority Conservation Areas). Relative to Priority Conservation Areas, Staff is recommending an opt-in approach for local jurisdictions in keeping with the voluntary, incentive-based approach that is a key aspect of FOCUS Priority Development Areas.

GreenVision - Summary

GreenVision is an effort being spearheaded by the Bay Area Open Space Council and the Greenbelt Alliance. The effort encompasses the Bay Area's nine counties and a broad spectrum of local, regional, and state-level open space protection entities including county parks departments and regional open space districts. Green Vision will identify a range of potential open space protection priorities from important wildlife habitat areas and prime agricultural lands and recreational lands.

FOCUS and GreenVision Synthesis

FOCUS and GreenVision commenced at approximately the same time in spring 2006 and both efforts build upon a rich legacy of Bay Area land protection and regional planning efforts. Because both programs are *regional* open space protection priority efforts that will encompass a *broad range* of open space types, the potential benefits of collaboration between the two efforts was recognized early on. As a result, ABAG staff is part of the GreenVision steering committee and have contributed to GreenVision priority setting meetings in each of the nine counties. In addition regional agency (ABAG, MTC) and non-profit agency staff related to the GreenVision effort have shared data to be used as a basis for the development of regional open space priority plan(s).

The Green Vision Group will be working over the next several months to analyze the meeting results and associated data, evaluate and prioritize areas, and ultimately, develop an implementation strategy. Given that the regional agencies serve the collective regional interest of local governments, it is necessary to clarify how FOCUS will proceed with identifying priority conservation areas and seeking local government input.

Staff proposes the following FOCUS approach to identifying and evaluating priority conservation areas:

- Review Green Vision recommendations on areas that need protection based upon these considerations:
 - *Level of consensus*
Is this area already reflected in an existing plan? Is work underway to protect this area?
Is there political will?
 - *Significance*
What is the added conservation value? What role does this area play in adding to the region's network of green infrastructure?
 - *Urgency*
Is there an opportunity for the region to provide needed support to this area? What existing or potential threats support the need for conserving this area?

- Send an application to jurisdictions within each county encompassing a list of areas supportive of these considerations so that the local governments can review and nominate areas for consideration as a priority conservation area.
- Staff will review these nominations and present them during another series of outreach meetings in each of the nine counties. Those areas that are supported by local jurisdictions for inclusion in the FOCUS Priority Conservation Area Plan will be presented for adoption by the regional agencies concurrent with Priority Development Areas. As the region's blueprint, the FOCUS Priority Conservation Area plan provides a mechanism to ensure that Bay Area open space priorities are recognized as state-level priorities relative to open space-related bond measures including Proposition 84.

Priority Conservation Area Adoption Process

- Policy Recommendation

Staff recommends that the JPC endorse the approach to identifying and evaluating Priority Conservation Areas as outlined in this memo and as endorsed by the ABAG Regional Planning Committee on April 4, 2007.